

Message Text

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R 271305 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4908

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

DIA WASHDC

EUCOM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USAREUR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 1091

E. O. 11652: XGDS 4

TAGS: PINS MILI RO

SUBJECT: DEMOTION OF INTERIOR MINISTER ION STANESCU

REF: BUCHAREST 0943 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS REMOVAL ARE UNCLEAR, IT HAS TO BE CONCLUDED AT THIS TIME THAT INTERIOR MINISTER (AND SECURITY CHIEF) ION STANESCU HAS BEEN DEMOTED. IN KEEPING WITH PRACTICE OF EFFECTING LEADERSHIP CHANGES GRADUALLY, STANESCU' S DEMOTION HAS NOT BEEN TOTAL, HOWEVER (HE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN ASSIGNED TO HEAD A CC SECTION ALTHOUGH THERE IS AS YET NO PUBLIC CONFIRMATION THEREOF). A WORD OF MOUTH BUT APPARENTLY SEMI- OFFICIAL LINE HAS EMERGED TO EXPLAIN STANESCU' S SUDDEN REMOVAL-- THAT HE CREATED CONDITIONS FOR " AN INTERNATIONAL SCANDAL" BY AUTHORIZING AN ILLEGAL AND ABORTED ATTEMPT TO RETURN FORCIBLY FROM GERMANY A ROMANIAN WORKER (ALLEGEDLY A SECURITY AGENT) WHO HAD REQUESTED ASYLUM IN FRG, THEREBY JEOPARDIZING CEAUSESCU' S FORTHCOMING STATE VISIT TO FRG.

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HOWEVER, GERMAN BORDER INCIDENT, WHICH MAY HAVE PROVIDED EXCUSE TO EFFECT STANESCU' S REMOVAL, DOES NOT SATISFACTORILY EXPLAIN FALL OF MAN CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN CEAUSESCU' S CLOSE CONFIDANT AND POSSIBLE RELATIVE OF CEAUSESCU' S WIFE THROUGHARIAN ORIGINALLY NAMED SZILAGHY. NEW VERSION STATES THAT HE IS ONE OF TWO PROMINENT SZILAGHY BROTHERS WHO CHANGED THEIR NAMES, OTHER BEING ONE- TIME DEFENSE MINISTER SALAJAN, NOW DECEASED.

7. DUE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF SECURITY AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS, OUR CONTACTS HAVE BEEN UNDERSTANDABLY NERVOUS AND UNWILLING DISCUSS SUBJECT. ADDITIONALLY, HIGHLY POSSIBLE ONLY HANDFUL OF INDIVIDUALS ARE PRIVY TO FULL DETAILS. AVAILABLE EVIDENCE DOES SUGGEST THAT STATUS OF SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT HAS DECLINED IN RECENT MONTHS IN FAVOR OF ARMED FORCES, REVERSAL OF TREND BEGUN LATE IN 1971 WHEN ARMY APPEARED TAKE BLAME FOR GENERAL SERB AFFAIR. AT THAT TIME, PROMULGATION OF STATE SECRETS LAW SEEMED STRENGTHEN HAND OF SECURITY FORCES; NEW CONSTRUCTION OF FACILITIES FOR SECURITY ORGANS WERE INITIATED; NEW EQUIPMENT PURCHASED; AND CEAUSESCU AT NOVEMBER 1971 PLENUM USED THREAT OF USE OF SECURITY ORGANS TO WARN PARTY APPARAT TO " PUT HOUSE IN ORDER." STANESCU (WHO IS LONG- TIME CEAUSESCU ASSOCIATE BORN IN CEAUSESCU' S OWN BIRTHPLACE OF SCORNICESTI) APPEARED TO INCREASE HIS PERSONAL POWER YET FURTHER WHEN COUNCIL OF STATE SECURITY AND MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS WERE MERGED UNDER HIM LAST APRIL.

8. LATELY, PATTERN OF ACTIONS AND EVENTS SUGGESTS INCREASED CEAUSESCU RELIANCE ON ARMED FORCES AT EXPENSE OF SECURITY FORCES. THIS EVIDENCED BY OVERALL COORDINATING AUTHORITY GIVEN ARMED FORCES UNDER NATIONAL DEFENSE LAW PROMULGATED IN DECEMBER. IN ADDITION, CIVIL AVAATION INCORPORATED WITHIN MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE LAST OCTOBER. IN RECENT SPEECHES AT EASI AND BUCHAREST, CEAUSESCU EMPHASIZED NEED TO INCREASE MILITARY SPENDING. IN CONTRAST, WHILE CEAUSESCU PROMISED ARMY AT JANUARY 27 DINNER TO DO " EVERYTHING TO RAISE THE ARMY' S LEVEL OF EQUIPMENT," HE USED SAME OCCASION TO LECTURE SECURITY ORGANS ON NEED TO RESPECT SOCIALIST LEGALITY AND REMAIN WITHIN THE LAW. STANESCU CURIOUSLY REFERRED TO SOME UNSPECIFIED " PROBLEMS" CONCERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN DEFENSE AND INTERIOR MINISTRIES ON SAME OCCASION.

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9. ALSO OF POSSIBLE BEARING ON STANESCU CASE, WE HAVE RECENTLY

LEARNED FROM SWISS AMBASSADOR THAT DEP. MIN. INTERIOR MAJOR-GENERAL NICOLAE STATE (CHIEF OF MILITIA GENERAL INSPECTORATE AND A CANDIDATE MEMBER OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE) HAS REMAINED IN SWITZERLAND AFTER HIS EARLY DECEMBER TRIP TO PARIS TO DEPOSIT GOR'S FORMAL APPLICATION FOR INTERPOL MEMBERSHIP. STATE WAS REPLACED ON DECEMBER 25 BY MAJOR- GENERAL ION JEAN MOLDOVEANU WHO REPORTEDLY HAS SECURITY BACKGROUND.

10. COMMENT: IT IS STILL DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT IS INVOLVED IN STANESCU'S OUSTER, BUT IT DOES APPEAR ON BASIS OF PARA 2 THAT IN ASSIGNMENT AS CC SECTION CHIEF HE HAS SUFFERED UNMISTAKABLE DEMOTION. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING PATTERN OF OTHER LEADERSHIP CHANGES, DEMOTION IS PARTIAL, REFLECTING TENUOUS POLITICAL BALANCE. ASSUMING
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 1091

E. O. 11652: XGDS 4
TAGS: PINS MILI RO
SUBJECT: DEMOTION OF INTERIOR MINISTER ION STANESCU

5. RUMORS ARE ALSO CIRCULATING WHICH IMPLICATE STANESCU IN ALLEGED ANTI- CEAUSESCU AND PRO- SOVIET ACTIVITIES. ONE ROMANIAN ACCOUNT INVOLVES STANESCU IN PRO- SOVIET PLOT WITH SECURITY GENERAL CONSTANTIN MLESNITA (IDENTIFIED IN 1967 PRESS REPORT AS SECRETARY OF POLITICAL COUNCIL OF SECURITY TROOPS) AND REGIME DOCTOR, ABRAHAM SCHACHTER (REPORTEDLY

GHEORGHIU- DEJ' S PHYSICIAN). REPORT ALLEGES THAT SCHACHTER COMMITTEE SUICIDE (MARCH 25 EDITION OF ROMANIA LIBERA CARRIES FAMILY DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT). SE OUR A-071 FOR ANOTHER SUCH REPORT. ALTHOUGH WE TEND TO DISCOUNT PLOT VERSIONS, IT IS INTERESTING THAT SOVIET COUNSELLOR PESHCHERSKY, IN PROBING SUBJECT WITH DCM, SAID HE HAD HEARD TWO SETS OF " RUMORS"-- ONE, AN INCIDENT IN GERMANY (SEE PARA 3) AND TWO, A CONNECTION WITH THE GENERAL SERB CASE. (PESHCHERSKY CLAIMED THERE MUST BE OTHER, AS YET UNASCERTAINED, CAUSES.)
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6 . VARIATION OF PLOT RUMOR IS THAT STANESCU WAS INVOLVED IN ANTI- CEAUSESCU ACTIVITY AMONG THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY GROUP. SEVERAL ROMANIAN AND EE SOURCES CLAIM STANESCU IS ETHNIC HUNGARY TO QUESTION (B).

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